



OVERCOMING POWERLESSNESS

Freedom from emotional abuse.

Spring 2015

A Newsletter Dedicated to Empowering Women

vol 2, issue 1

UPCOMING EVENT

Flying Free

Fundraising Luncheon

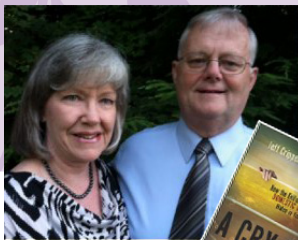
featuring Keynote Speaker:

Jeff Crippen

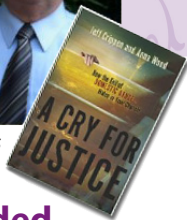
Pastor & Author

Saturday, May 2 • 11am-3 pm
at Heritage Hills Terrace Building

Visit www.ICanBreakFree.com
or call 717-927-6873 for details!



Jeff Crippen and his wife, Verla



Recommended Reading

"A Cry for Justice - How the Evil of Domestic Abuse Hides in Your Church" by Jeff Crippen and Anna Wood.

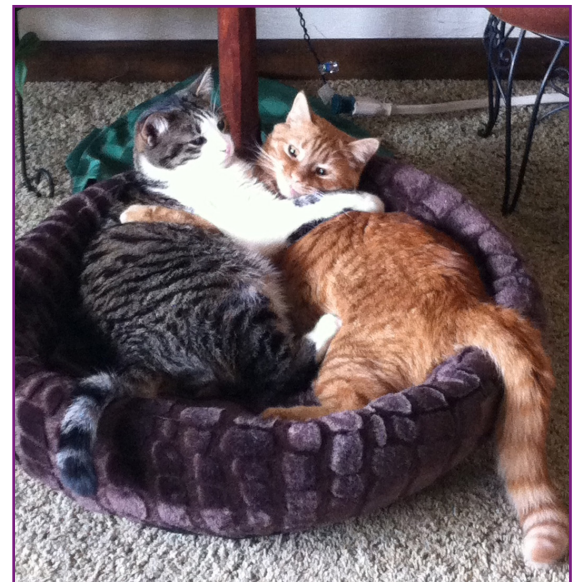
Domestic abuse is generally a taboo subject in our churches, spoken about in hushed tones and behind closed doors. But it is a very real problem. This may be the most important book addressed to the church on this issue and may come as a lifesaver for those under the thumb of an abusive person.

What Makes a Healthy Relationship?

A healthy relationship is comprised of characteristics like mutual respect, trust and love. Whether we have been involved in an emotionally abusive relationship or not, it is sometimes wise to take inventory of ourselves and our partner. By doing so can we determine if our relationship is on a healthy path or needs some help to be steered in another direction.

A healthy relationship . . .

- Involves both parties determining what they will do when they are together. It is not one-sided, but mutual.
- Allows both parties to experience some independence doing activities apart from one another.
- Each party shows the other that they believe what they have to say and how they feel is important. This is done through words and actions.
- Each party continues to show love and affection even during difficult times. Affection is not withheld as a consequence.
- Communication even during conflict is productive and positive. There is little blaming or shaming.
- Understands there will be hard times and can be forgiving. There are no attempts to fix the other or fix the problem to please the other. Instead there is listening and acceptance.
- Allows relationships with family and friends to continue and blossom. There is no stifling of each other's interactions or attempts to isolate.
- Each party is willing to work on the relationship versus threatening to end the relationship.
- Lacks jealousy because it is built on trust.
- Allows intimacy to occur freely and naturally. Does not force intimate actions on the other party.
- Involves sharing interests. It is not solely based on physical attraction.
- Feels comfortable and safe instead of the feeling of walking on eggshells.
- Does not hurt the other on a consistent basis, either physically or emotionally.



We are all human beings and do falter at times such as saying negative things, showing ill feelings, or even acting harshly. But if we deeply care, we will communicate and work through the difficulties.

There are many people and organizations who can guide you. Overcoming Powerlessness is one of them.

~ written by Ann Elicker, CASA Coordinator

A Personal Story

By Ann Elicker

So many people experience hardships in a relationship with a significant other. I told myself that I was just one of those “many.” As I look back there were subtle hints early on that things were not healthy. As the years passed, those hints grew louder and bigger. However, to maintain daily life I was blind to the signs.

My partner started out as a prince charming, showering me with gifts, kind words, and affection. These



eventually changed to idle threats, taking away car keys, throwing things, constant put-downs, blocking social support, and the use of control to get whatever he wanted. He would belittle me so I did the chores he didn't want to. He would order me around and back me into a corner until I agreed to purchases he wanted, no matter the cost or financial consequence. He used guilt and negativity toward me to get sex, whenever and however he wanted.

As a young businesswoman I was horrified when the doctor told me I had depression. I was even more mortified when I had to take medication to regulate my mood. The incessant flow of tears finally stopped and my heart was not willing to bear any more blame or shame. I had left several times, but always returned. He would vow that things would be different, but quickly I was disappointed. I had a sense of commitment, but eventually I realized I had to be committed to myself if I was going to have a successful future.

I attended an OCP fundraiser and heard women tell their stories of emotional abuse. I knew that was me too. It was hard to accept that I had been emotionally abused for well over a decade, but this time I had left for good and the healing was beginning.

After finally getting free, I was able to look back and see the signs of abuse. Somehow that craziness made sense now. The journey has not been easy, but I had support from OCP. There are still hurdles to cross, but I am so glad to be well and healthy!

“When all you have is your freedom, sometimes that’s enough.”

– An OCP group member

“The wise person, knowing that difficulty is a part of life, will look for ways to become strong”.

– Norman Vincent Peale

“Figure out what you want from the world and then give it instead”

– Emily Post





From The Director

Hi Everyone. Welcome to Spring!

Overcoming Powerlessness (OCP) is having our seventh Flying Free Fundraiser. Jeff Crippen and Anna Wood wrote the book "A Cry for Justice". I first heard about it two years ago during a group meeting when a member, pulled out her smart phone and started reading excerpts from the book. We sat there mesmerized, hardly believing what we were hearing from a male pastor on domestic abuse in the church! In January when I still hadn't gotten a speaker for our event, this same group member took it upon herself to contact the author. Facebook to the rescue. He wrote back immediately and within three days, after agreeing to come, we had his plane ticket and everything was in place for May 2nd!

How many abuse victims finally get the courage to seek help and turn to their pastors, but are given superficial advice, accused of not being good enough wives or children or told they are surely exaggerating - then are sent home to "do better" and suffer even more at the hands of their abuser? You can understand why the fear of confiding abuse is real.

The other evening I was sitting with group members who were talking about surviving abuse and how it changes their priorities. One of them said "When all you have is your freedom, sometimes that's enough!" I was immediately taken back and said, "What did you say?" At the same moment another person said, "Write that down, Bonnie!" See if you can find it somewhere else in this newsletter.

Overcoming Powerlessness is completing our 20th year! We have served many hurting individuals and presented at two public events this year. In the next couple weeks, we will have a fresh look to our web site. Also, watch for an announcement about an Awareness Walk or Walk for Empowerment or something like that.

As I give myself in service, I do what is mine to do.

Bonnie Wilt

P.S. Please note the delightful picture of the two adolescent kittens on the front page. They are twin brothers, Tigger and Koda, and reside with Fred and me. The picture illustrates the connection in a healthy relationship – loving and tender.

Remember, your support allows us to continue serving women through times of deep pain and despair. We are grateful to each of you who support us with your financial gifts. Your contributions are heartwarming.



Power Tips

- Emotional abuse is any behavior that does not affirm or nurture another's sense of self. Recognizing it is the first step toward stopping it.
- Take responsibility for the changes you want to happen.
- When two people are angry, their problem cannot be solve. We cannot be angry and heal at the same time.
- Self-forgiveness is one of the most essential building blocks to self-esteem.

Assertive Statements

"I'm sorry, but this doesn't suit. I can't take on anything else at this time."

"I'd like to help you, but I just don't feel up to it at the moment."

"Thank you for asking me. You're a nice person, but I don't want to go out with you."

YOUR OPINIONS ARE IMPORTANT!

Comments, questions, letters and donations are always welcome.

Go to www.ICanBreakFree.com
or call 717.927.6873.

Overcoming Powerlessness is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization listed with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations and incorporated within the Commonwealth of PA. It is dedicated to the education, support and awareness of individuals who seek to break the patterns that maintain abusive behavior.

www.ICanBreakFree.com



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